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To: Microsoft ATR
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Michael Gibbs

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Attorney General John Ashcroft

US Department of Justice

950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear Mr. Ashcroft:

The judge should approve the settlement of the Microsoft antitrust case. It would be the best thing that could happen for America to end this court action. It is time to take the bull by the horns and throw it out of the ring. The lawsuit should not have been brought by the Justice Department and the eighteen states. Remember, thirty-two states would not join it three years ago when all they had to do was sign on. Now, though, the settlement provides a way to end the lawsuit that everyone should be able to live with. After all, the judge appointed a mediator who negotiated with the parties for three months to reach an agreement that everyone could live with, everyone except nine states with less successful competitors to Microsoft who think they would do better if Microsoft was forcibly split into pieces.

Microsoft should be allowed to get back to the good work they have always done. They are no fly-by-night instant wonder without morals. They have always kept honest books and maintained their legal rights, as they expected others to do. Under the settlement, Microsoft will be allowed to go back to work in return for giving up its legal rights to some of its software and business practices. Microsoft will give away to other companies its internal interface code for its various Windows programs, and the protocols that allow its server computers to work with other computers. When a company needs to use Microsoft's other software code, Microsoft has given up its right to say no. Instead Microsoft will license its codes to any company on reasonable, non-discriminatory terms. So, Microsoft will really be surrendering its legal rights to other companies, even those that it would not want to help if it had a choice. This will be good for the computer industry as a whole. It is disturbing, though, to see a great, honest, company like Microsoft forced to give up its legal rights for no good reason. If Microsoft is not safe, who is?

Your support for the settlement is crucial to letting Microsoft and the American computer industry get back to work. Thank you for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

Michael Gibbs